

## How Salvesen Mindroom Centre works to #KeepThePromise

In October 2016, the First Minister of Scotland made a commitment that everyone in Scotland should love the most vulnerable children and give them the childhood they deserve. She commissioned the Independent Care Review and, between February 2017 and February 2020, the Care Review looked at the best way to keep that Promise. 'The Promise' is the name of the programme and the organisation that will put everything in place to change things for the better for all of Scotland's care experienced children of any age, young people and their families.

The main aim of The Promise (#KeepThePromise) is **that every child grows up loved, safe and respected, able to realise their full potential.**

Salvesen Mindroom Centre fully supports The Promise and is committed to #KeepThePromise and do whatever we can to help make Scotland the best place in the world for all children to grow up, especially those affected by neurodiversity.

The list below shows some of the key points in The Promise and The Plan to implement it. And alongside, we say how our work supports The Promise.

You can download the full reports and find out more about the Independent Care Review at [carereview.scot](http://carereview.scot) and the ongoing work of The Promise at [thepromise.scot](http://thepromise.scot)

The Promise – The 5 Foundations	
<p><b>Voice</b></p> <p>When children speak, adults must really listen to them. Adults must make sure that children are included in decisions about their lives.</p>	<p>We work directly with young people to help them express their views and ensure they're heard and respected by adults around them and so that they're fully involved in decision making. We also promote the <a href="#">UNCRC</a> across all of our work.</p>
<p><b>Family</b></p> <p>If children are living with their family and are safe and feel loved, they should stay there. Their family should be given all the help they need to stay together. If they need extra help when things get difficult, they should get it.</p>	<p>When a child or young person is neurodivergent, we can work with the family and professionals supporting them to help them understand the impact of neurodiversity. We can provide information and advice to the whole family that helps them to stay strong.</p>
<p><b>Care</b></p> <p>If children cannot stay with the adults in their family, they will stay with their brothers and sisters. The home they live in together will be a place where they feel safe and loved. It should be their home for as long as they want and need it to be.</p>	<p>We help Children &amp; Young People to express their views and promote positive relationships with those who support and care for them, including their views about staying together with their siblings if that is what they want. We help people to understand the ways in which neurodiversity can affect the needs of children and young people, creating a sense of acceptance, safety and love for neurodivergent children and young people.</p>

The Promise – The 5 Foundations	
<p><b>People</b></p> <p>Relationships are important. Adults must make sure children are able to stay close to the people they want to and keep in contact with them. Adults must also help children make new relationships as they grow up. Sometimes adults need some help too. The adults who are close to children must get the help they need to make sure they can do their best for children.</p>	<p>We work with professionals and provide training to help them understand better the needs of neurodivergent children and young people. We also provide advice, information and emotional support to parents &amp; carers.</p>
<p><b>Scaffolding</b></p> <p>Help and support must be there for children and families whenever they need it. It must also be there for the adults who are close to children and families. It is important everyone knows where to go for help and that it is ready when it is asked for.</p>	<p>We provide our services to neurodivergent children and young people, their parents and carers free of charge. We don't need a diagnosis before our help is offered. We take part in consultations that the Scottish Government organise and contribute to a wide range of cross-party groups to help influence policy and practice in a way that will improve the lives of neurodivergent children &amp; young people.</p>

The Promise – Ten Principles of Intensive Family Support	
<p><b>Community Based</b></p> <p>Intensive family support must be based in local communities, making the most of what the community has to offer. Support must be connected to, or even housed in, locations that work for local families and the community, such as schools, health centres, village halls and sports centres. Scotland knows where this support is most needed. Communities must have a say in where support is located.</p>	<p>We offer training and speakers for parents' groups in a range of community settings, including through local schools. We are members of many Third Sector Interfaces across Scotland and work with other organisations to ensure support is coordinated within local communities.</p>
<p><b>Responsive and Timely</b></p> <p>Intensive family support services must operate outwith a Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm approach. There must be no concept of an 'out of hours' service. Families do not operate on those timescales and support must respond to family need.</p>	<p>We provide information and advice to families about local intensive family support services. Our team work flexibly to meet the needs of the families we support.</p>
<p><b>Work with Family Assets</b></p> <p>When working with families, support must take a strengths-based approach rather than focusing on what is going wrong. The starting point must be listening to what children and their families say they need in order to flourish, not what the system says they need.</p>	<p>Our work is always focused on the positives, we believe that focusing on a young person's skills, strengths and talents they can be helped to flourish and fulfil their potential. Listening to children &amp; young people, and supporting them to have their voices heard, is central to our work and we use our newsletter and other publications to celebrate their successes where this is appropriate.</p>

<b>The Promise – Ten Principles of Intensive Family Support</b>	
<p><b>Empowerment and Agency</b></p> <p>Children and their families must have a say about the people who provide them with support. Intensive family support requires relationships built on trust and honesty. If support services are going to succeed, the families receiving support must be able to choose those people with whom they have a natural connection. Peer support has been proven to work in other parts of the world and must be tested during the Implementation of the Care Review. There should be no barriers to families' wishes being carried out, with members of various services and organisations available as a support team says they need.</p>	<p>Anyone accessing our service is supported by one identified team member to enable relationship building based on trust, openness and transparency. We always begin our work with relationship building. We aim to ensure everyone who accesses our service is supported, informed and empowered, ensuring all our communication is open, transparent and respectful. Before we work closely with children, young people or their families, we plan together what we will do and how we will do it.</p>
<p><b>Flexible</b></p> <p>The needs of each family are different and Scotland must recognise the unique needs of families to ensure that support is tailored and specific. Scotland must think creatively in terms of the support families might need and ensure the workforce is responsive. For some families there may be a need for partial foster care (a couple of nights a week). For other families there may be a need for live in support to raise the capacity of parents. There is not a 'one size fits all' approach. The crux of success lies in the family-workforce relationships.</p>	<p>Our work is always led by the needs of the child or young person, whether we are working with them directly or providing support and advice to their family or other professional who are working with them. Our work is tailored to individual circumstances.</p>
<p><b>Holistic and Relational</b></p> <p>Children live within families and support must be family based. Interventions must be focused on the wider family context so that there are not a multitude of services addressing specific, isolated and individual issues within families. The likelihood of success is not based on the specific intervention but on a relationship of trust between families and workers. Support must look across the width of the family and not simply the variety of issues that the family may present with. Family plans must incorporate the child's plan (and the needs of all other children who may be impacted by changes in the family setting) and these must always be actively considered as part of decision making.</p>	<p>We provide support to parents/carers and children and young people, based on trusting relationships, ensuring support is available to the whole family where appropriate. We support parents/carers/children and young people to have their views and needs fully considered within the creation of Child's Plans.</p>
<p><b>Therapeutic</b></p> <p>It is likely that families requiring long-term intensive support have experienced trauma in their lives. Scotland must ensure that support to families recognises trauma and works with families to heal. There must be no barrier that limits parents and children from having access to mental health support when and if required.</p>	<p>We work closely with mental health services and provide advice and information to parents, carers and children and young people about accessing appropriate supports. We provide training on neurodiversity to those working within the medical profession, including in mental health services. Our staff all undertake mental health first aid training.</p>

The Promise – Ten Principles of Intensive Family Support	
<p><b>Non-Stigmatising</b></p> <p>The way in which support is delivered must not stigmatise the family. That means there must be no uniforms, lanyards or branded vehicles appearing outside houses or schools to provide support. The basis of all support must be the quality of relationships, not the professionalisation of the workforce. The language of family support must reflect normal conversation, and not be hidden behind professional language such as ‘looked after child’ (“LAC”), reviews and risk assessment. Overly professionalised language stigmatises families and acts as a barrier to engaging and supportive work.</p>	<p>Our staff do not wear uniforms and only wear ID when it is required by an establishment that we are visiting. We do, however, always carry ID that we can show when requested. Those who travel to meet families in their own homes travel in their own vehicles, we do not use branded company vehicles. We always communicate with those we support in ways that are accessible to them, including in the language that we use, and often provide support and advice to those who are finding official language and processes difficult to navigate.</p>
<p><b>Patient and Persistent</b></p> <p>Scotland must accept that human change takes time and effort. Intervention has to be based on need. Scotland must move away from limiting intervention to set periods of time. Long term change and intensive support take time and Scotland must be patient in working with families where there are complex, challenging circumstances.</p>	<p>Our support is issue-based, rather than being based on a timeframe. People who have received support from us are welcome to return at any time for more support.</p>
<p><b>Underpinned by Children’s Rights</b></p> <p>Whilst the family must be viewed collectively and not as isolated individuals, support services must be underpinned by the rights of the children they are working with. That means ensuring that all the rights of children are upheld in all decisions and support for the family. It will mean that children’s rights are the funnel through which every decision and support service is viewed</p>	<p>We support the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in its entirety and are pleased to see its adoption into Scottish Law. The rights and needs of the child/young person underpin all that we do.</p>

Plan 21-24 – The Fundamentals	
<p><b>What matters to children and families</b></p> <p>At all stages in the process of change, what matters to children and families must be the focus. Organisations will be able to demonstrate that they are operating from their perspective rather than the perspective internal to the ‘system’</p>	<p>The rights and needs of the child/young person is always at the core of what we do, which includes providing advocacy to children and young people whose voices are not being heard. We start our work by taking on board the views and concerns of the child, young person, parent or carer and they remain central to how we work.</p>
<p><b>Listening</b></p> <p>Organisations that have responsibilities towards care experienced children and families, and those on the edge of care will be able to demonstrate that they are embedding what they have heard from children and families into the work that they are doing to #KeepThePromise</p>	<p>We are currently exploring ways in which we can engage with children and young people to allow their voices to have a greater influence on what we do and how we do it.</p>

Plan 21-24 – The Fundamentals	
<p><b>Poverty</b></p> <p>Scotland will have made consistent improvement in reducing poverty, in line with the definitions and targets in the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017. Organisations will be able to demonstrate how they are ensuring that they play their part in mitigating the impacts of poverty.</p>	<p>We do not charge for our direct help and support, making it available to all who need it. We also monitor SIMD data to ensure we are avoiding any bias in our services.</p>
<p><b>Children’s Rights</b></p> <p>Organisations that have responsibilities towards care experienced children will be able to demonstrate that their rights under the UNCRC are being consistently upheld.</p>	<p>We support the UNCRC in its entirety and contributed to the consultations that were part of the process by which it entered into Scottish law.</p>
<p><b>Language</b></p> <p>Organisations that have responsibilities towards care experienced children and young people will be able to demonstrate that they are embedding destigmatising language and practices across the way they work.</p>	<p>Effective communication can be a challenge for those affected by neurodiversity. As well as supporting individuals to communicate their own needs we are conscious of our need to communicate in ways that are appropriate and meaningful to them. We always use positive language with and about neurodivergent young people and challenge inappropriate language when we encounter it. We often provide support and advice to those who are finding official language and processes difficult to navigate.</p>

The Plan 21-24 – Priority Areas	
<p><b>A Good Childhood</b></p> <p>“Care experienced children and young adults have told the Care Review that their time looked after by the state often felt cold, overly professionalised, stigmatising and uncaring. Scotland should be a good parent to the children it has responsibility for. That means carers and workers must act, speak and behave like a family so that Scotland can be the best parent it can be. Scotland must stop stigmatising the children it cares for.” The Promise, page 87</p>	<p>The Neurodiversity paradigm recognises that humanity is much the better for being made up of individuals with brains that work in a wide variety of ways. We help people to understand the ways in which neurodivergent children and young people may need additional support and understanding. We treat the children and young people we support with care and respect.</p>
<p><b>Whole Family Support</b></p> <p>“Where children are safe in their families and feel loved they must stay – and families must be given support together to nurture that love and overcome the difficulties which get in the way. Scotland must listen to and absorb the overwhelming evidence of the lasting pain that removal has caused children, families and communities. This must result in a fundamental shift of thinking about when a child should be removed from their family.” The Promise, page 16</p>	<p>Living with neurodivergence can bring challenges for many people, which may include behaviour that some find challenging. We provide support and advice to help people and those around them overcome the difficulties that they may face as a result.</p>

The Plan 21-24 – Priority Areas	
<p><b>Supporting the Workforce</b></p> <p>“The workforce needs support, time and care to develop and maintain relationships. Scotland must hold the hands of those who hold the hand of the child. Scotland must place trust in its workforce to develop and nurture relationships, enable their capacity to care and love and provide support to make this part of daily life. As well as access to advice and networks, carers must be given time to focus on developing relationships, and to reflect on whether these are delivering what the child needs. The boundaries and barriers that prevent nurturing relationships developing and lasting, such as not allowing friendships between residential workers and children after they have moved on, must be removed.” The Promise, page 21</p>	<p>We provide information and training to professionals working with neurodivergent children and young people . Increased understanding of neurodiversity can help those who care for neurodivergent individuals to do so even more effectively.</p>
<p><b>Planning</b></p> <p>“Scotland must avoid the monetisation of the care of children and prevent the marketisation of care. There must be strategic, needs based planning for children so that they are provided with warm, relational, therapeutic, safe, loving environments when they are required. Scotland must make sure that its most vulnerable children are not profited from. The application of that principle must be delivered in a way that does not impact the current delivery of good, important services for children. Follow the Money and The Money demonstrates that Scotland needs to take a different approach to how it invests in its children and families. There is no place for profiting in how Scotland cares for its children.” The Promise, page 112</p>	<p>We never charge for our direct help and support and do not profit from the children that we support or the support that we give to them. We provide help and advice to the professionals that are planning for the needs of neurodivergent children and young people. We are a registered charity.</p>
<p><b>Building Capacity</b></p> <p>“Children, families and the workforce must be supported by a system that is there when it is needed. The scaffolding of help, support and accountability must be ready and responsive when it is required. The current ‘care system’ does not operate as a system. At its worst, it can perpetuate and worsen the trauma that many children have already experienced. At present, the ‘care system’ and its associated elements does not enable children to feel loved, safe and respected. Scotland must facilitate a conversation that ensures wider appetite for change and take the lead through practical legislation, policy and practice change. The landscape is cluttered, complex and does not provide a clear frame to support children, families, decision makers and service providers.”</p> <p>“The current ‘care system’ operates within complex legislative frameworks, is bureaucratic and expensive, and does not operate as a single entity. It does not universally uphold the rights of children and does not provide the context for loving relationships to flourish. Scotland must create an approach to care where maintaining, sustaining and protecting loving relationships is possible and much more probable. In order to make the change required, the scaffolding of the future approach to care must be re-orientated to protect and promote loving, long lasting relationships. This must be done with the expectation that the approach is safe, upholds rights and is open to scrutiny.” The Promise, page 25</p>	<p>We respond to Scottish Government consultations of policy and practice that will affect the lives of children and young people affected by neurodiversity. We also sit on many cross-party groups organised by the Scottish Parliament to speak for the needs of those affected by neurodiversity. Our practice is rights-based and evidence-based and we work with people to secure the outcomes that they identify as most important, built upon trusting and respectful relationships.</p>



Salvesen Mindroom Centre

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